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gomery; while Zélide, soon tired of her humdrum life as Mme. de Charrière the schoolmaster's wife, found what consolation she could in a brilliant literary career and in the intimate friendship of Benjamin Constant.

Although the omission of such important material from the chapters on "Boswell in Love" and "Wooing a Wife" might well shake one's confidence in all the rest of the book, such omissions are the exception rather than the rule. In general, the old material is carefully handled, with a generous admixture of letters now first printed. Hence it is that the book as a whole serves to convey a clearer and fairer picture of Boswell than we have had before. He is not the Boswell of the older biographies, an insolent idiot, but a boisterous, eccentric genius always willing to put himself in a bad light in order to illustrate the dazzling radiance of Dr. Johnson.

EDWARD D. SNYDER.

Haverford, Pa.

Short Stories of America. By ROBERT L. RAMSAY, Ph. D. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921. 348 pp.

It may be conceded, I believe, that further analysis of the short story art is not urgently needed. The secrets of the writer's technique have been adequately disclosed in dozens of manuals and textbooks. But for discriminating collections of short stories, particularly those made from a fresh point of view, there is always room. Such a book is the collection of regional short stories which Professor Ramsay has brought together.

The book is not, as the title might seem to indicate, a gathering of patriotic or historical tales. It is only geographically that these stories may be called American, for their authors seize eagerly upon alien ways and half-foreign speech or upon archaic survivals that seem scarcely less foreign. And they can hardly be said to portray the diverse scenery of America more faithfully than do many ordinary stories of adventure. A text-book need not, of course, be named with technical precision; and it must be admitted that for the literary type with which Professor Ramsay deals no wholly satisfactory name has been devised. Of the three which he mentions—American regionalism, local color, and the spirit of home—the last seems to me wholly inadmissible. Home as such

plays no real part in these stories, and its spirit, whatever it may be, has not been confined to any form of literature. The term local color, besides belonging to another art, is perhaps somewhat narrower than the thing to be named, for Professor Ramsay has found in the contrast between regionalism, "the literature of the restricted locality," and Americanism, "the literature of the undifferentiated nation as a whole," something akin to the strife between states' rights and national unity.

This contrast is made concrete by a literary map in which the regions already exploited by the local colorists appear as the twenty-five literary states of America. These states are grouped into five sections: New England, The East, The South, The Middle West, and The West. In the South, for example, Professor Ramsay finds eight literary states: *The Old Dominion*, *Appalachia*, the mountain section, *The Blue Grass*, *The Middle South*, *The Lower South*, *The Swamp Region*, *The Creole Country*, *The River Country*, and *Canebrakes and Ozarks*.

No attempt has been made to represent each of these states by a story. The selections are grouped, according to stages in the development of the local color short story, into four classes: American types, American traditions, American landscapes, and American communities, in the last of which are blended evenly the elements of picturesque type, social heritage, and local scene. With the exception of *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, which is demanded by chronology, and *A Municipal Report*, which it would be hard to omit, though it probably belongs as much to some other parts of the South as to the Blue Grass, Professor Ramsay has been able to choose stories that have not yet found their way into the anthologies. This book is consequently as interesting to the general reader as to the student of American fiction. It is supplied with study questions and reading lists, designed to make the regional short story, not only "the interpreter of America," but also a means of escape, for students and teachers, from the tedium of the "weekly theme."

Professor Ramsay is an inveterate and acute maker of classifications. His book impresses one as an example of good workmanship throughout; and in thus setting before us in orderly array the riches of our regional fiction he has performed an extremely useful service.

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